



PLATE 153, FIG. 1.

DELMA FRAZERI (GRAY).

FRAZER'S DELMA.

[Genus DELMA (GRAY). (Sub-kingdom Vertebrata. Class Reptilia. Order Sauria. Sub-order Leptoglossæ. Tribe Geissosauræ. Family Pygopidæ.)

Gen. Char.—Body long, slender, tapering, snake-like; anterior limbs none; posterior limbs formed of small, flat, scaly, undivided flaps, one on each side of base of tail; pre-anal pores none; head small, ovate, with large symmetrical plates; rostral plate large; nostril in hind outer corner of transversely oblong nasal plate on each side; two pairs of transversely oblong supra-nasal, or fronto-nasal, plates, like the nasals; inter-nasal, or pre-frontal, plate large, heptagonal; frontal moderate, heptagonal, pointed behind; a pair of large parietal plates behind the frontal, and a small occipital between their posterior ends. Ears ovate, open, distinct, with simple edges. Scales hexagonal, smooth, unkeeled, small above; two rows, wider, along belly, one row of wider ones under middle of tail; eyes round, with circular, scaly, imperfect, immovable eye-lids; pupil nearly circular, broad-oval, erect. Parietal bones separate. Australia.]

DESCRIPTION.—Body and tail sub-cylindrical, very slightly flattened below, gradually tapering to a slender posterior point. Head semi-oval or sub-trigonal, sides nearly straight, converging to a bluntly-rounded, narrow muzzle, the tip of which measures to front edge of eye about as much as from posterior edge of eye to anterior edge of ear; rostral plate large, pentagonal, twice as wide as high; nasals small, transverse, quadrate, oblong, their inner ends touch, the outer end pierced by the large nostril, which is surrounded also by the first upper labial and the freno-nasal plate; naso-rostral plates transversely quadrate, inner ends touching, smaller than the nasals; fronto-nasals large, pentagonal, touching along inner edge, having freno-nasal and naso-rostral along longest front edge; inner posterior edge touching front edge on each side of inter-nasal; posterior outer edge touching a large ant-ocular or loreal plate in front of the two temporal plates; smallest outer edge touching the first of the three small frenal plates extending over the labials from the freno-nasal to a group of three or four small plates in front of the eye; inter-nasal or pre-frontal plate large, heptagonal, about as broad as long; frontal heptagonal, a little narrower and shorter than the pre-frontal, about one-third longer than wide, hind angle between parietals; two parietal plates, small, sub-pentagonal, inner edges in contact; straight, pointed posterior ends with a very small occipital plate between them; a large plate-like scale usually on each side of posterior lateral edge of parietal; upper labials five, fourth, under the eye, longest; lower labials four, first meeting under the chin behind the large trigonal mental plate; second very large, nearly meeting under throat, others small. Ear large, longitudinally-oval, slightly oblique, open, simple edged. Eye-lids covered with three rows of minute scales. Hind leg-flap small, as long as four scales of back at base, or equal to space from snout to orbit in males, shorter in females, covered with three rows of small scales, four in the middle row, placed at a distance from the ear of 65 rows of back scales. Scales of back small, sub-hexagonal, as broad as long, in fourteen to sixteen rows; belly, with two rows of from 50 to 60 pairs of larger hexagonal plates in middle, about twice as wide as long; three large pre-anal plates in a transverse row, middle one smallest; plates of under-side of tail in three rows of transversely hexagonal scales, middle row largest, nearly twice as wide as long near base, gradually becoming smaller, less transverse and irregularly arranged towards the

posterior end of tail. *Color*: Some specimens uniform light-greyish-brown, paler below; others have black, transverse patches on the snout, the middle of head coming down as a narrow, triangular mark through the eye on each cheek, and others have, in addition, a very variable number of fainter, triangular spots extending along the side where the back and belly scales meet, for a greater or less distance. *Measurements*: Tip of snout to base of leg-flaps, 3 in. 10 lines; tail, 12 in. 9 lines; tip of snout to ear, 5 lines; diameter at middle of body, $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines; number of scales on middle of back in half-an-inch, 10.

REFERENCE.—Gray, in Gray Trav. Anstral., v. 2, p. 427, t. 4, f. 3; = *Delma Grayi*, Smith Ill. Zool. S. Africa Rept., t. 76, f. 2; ? = *D. Mölleri* Lütken Vidensk. Meddel 1862, p. 296, t. 1. f. 2.

This genus mainly differs from *Pygopus* in the smooth, unkeeled scales of the body, and in the absence of the transverse row of pre-anal pores. The flaps representing the hind limbs are smaller than in that genus.

The original figure by Dr. Gray in Capt. Grey's Travels is much too short, the individual figured having obviously been broken during life, and the tail end re-grown of smaller dimensions than natural, as is very commonly seen; the apparently excessive length of Smith's figure being due to the specimen having escaped mutilation. I have no doubt that Dr Günther is quite correct in suggesting the specific identity of Gray's and Smith's species, the latter being really an Australian, and not an African, form. The greater number of the specimens found near Melbourne are of the plain uniform coloring of our figure, but I have a few with dark markings on the head and sides of neck depicted by Gray and Smith, differing in no other respect from the plain ones. One specimen in the Museum; from Newington station, in the Wimmera district, presented by Mr. Forster, of Stawell, has grown two tails, forking out from the place of previous fracture.

EXPLANATION OF FIGURES.

PLATE 153.—Fig. 1, average specimen of plain colored variety, natural size. Fig. 1a, top of head, magnified two diameters, to show form of plates (large scale outside parietals divided on one side). Fig. 1b, side view of head and neck, showing ear, magnified two diameters. Fig. 1c, portion of side view of head, magnified four diameters, to show more clearly the scaly eye-lid, the large fourth labial, under the eye, the large loreal or ant-ocular plate, and other plates on the side of the head more clearly. Fig. 1d, front view of head, magnified two diameters, to show the rostral and mental plates, and the downward prolongation of the first and second lower labials. Fig. 1e, plates of under-side of belly, magnified two diameters, showing the two median rows wider than the two lateral ones. Fig. 1f, scales of back, magnified two diameters. Fig. 1g, side view of posterior end of body and anterior end of tail, to show leg-flaps, magnified two diameters. Fig. 1h, same part of body, magnified two diameters, viewed from below, showing the pre-anal plates with four rows of abdominal and three rows of sub-caudal plates, with their relative sizes, magnified two diameters.

FREDERICK MCCOY.